

In today's second reading, Saint Paul calls upon the Philippians to "(be) of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing." We come here today probably each thinking different things, but during this holy time together we pray that the Holy Spirit may unite us in heart and mind, with the love of God and love of neighbor we have in common, as we lift our voices to sing and pray as one.

As we gather together let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

Profession of Faith: p. 108

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Introductory Rite:

Greeting:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

Penitential Rite:

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

Lord Jesus, you emptied yourself and took the form of a slave: Lord have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd who leads us to everlasting life:

Christ have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you will appear in glory at the end of time: Lord have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Opening Prayer:

O God, who manifest your almighty power above all by pardoning and showing mercy, bestow, we pray, your grace abundantly upon us and make those hastening to attain your promises heirs to the treasures of heaven.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 58

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel

Ezekiel 18:25-28

Thus says the LORD: You say, "The LORD's way is not fair!" Hear now, house of Israel: Is it my way that is unfair, or rather, are not your ways unfair? When someone virtuous turns away from virtue to commit iniquity, and dies, it is because of the iniquity he committed that he must die. But if he turns from the wickedness he has committed,

he does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins that he has committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm: p. 60

Psalm 25: 4-5, 8-9, 10, 14

R/. Remember you mercies, O Lord.

R/. Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me; teach me your paths, guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior. **R/.**

Remember that your compassion, O LORD, and your love are from of old. The sins of my youth and my frailties remember not; in your kindness remember me, because of your goodness, O LORD. **R/.**

Good and upright is the LORD; thus he shows sinners the way. He guides the humble to justice, and teaches the humble his way. **R/.**

Second Reading p. 56

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

Philippians 2:1-11 OR 2:1-5

In the shorter form of the reading, the passage in brackets is omitted.

Brothers and sisters: If there is any encouragement in Christ, any solace in love, any participation in the Spirit, any compassion and mercy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing. Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others.

Have in you the same attitude that is also in Christ Jesus,
[Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.]

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel p. 62

Matthew 21: 28-32

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, Lord

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people: "What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.' He said in reply, 'I will not, ' but afterwards changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, 'Yes, sir, 'but did not go. Which of the two did his father's will?" They answered, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Amen, I say to you, tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God before you. When John came to you in the way of righteousness, you did not believe him; but tax collectors and prostitutes did. Yet even when you saw that, you did not later change your minds and believe him."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:

The key in today's passage from Ezekiel is in the turning. What are you turning away from and what are you turning toward? It's not what happened in the past that matters, it's what you've turned to now. Every day we face choices, choices between right and wrong, choices between justice and injustice, choices between life and death. Each day we must consciously turn toward good.

This parable of the vineyard, like the one of the Last Judgment, is unique to Matthew. The theme of saying vs. doing runs throughout his Gospel. It is what you *do*, not what you *say*, that opens the door to eternal life. In Jesus' story of the Last Judgment, the king does not say to those on his right, "I was hungry and you said you would bring me food" or "I was naked and you told me you would get me some clothes." Similarly, here the son who does his father's will is the one who does the work, whether he said he would or not. Even the chief priests and elders agree. Yet they are not "walking the walk." Tax collectors, like Matthew, are. They turned away from sin and followed Jesus and are now teaching and preaching and anointing and healing and doing the actual work of building the kingdom of God. What you said before is irrelevant; what is important is working in the vineyard today.

Exhibit A in doing the Father's will, obviously, is Jesus Christ, who was, as Paul writes, "obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8), even though he said things like "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matthew 26:39) and "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (27:46). Even while pleading for mercy, he did not hold back from fulfilling his Father's will.

Question of the Week: What righteous act can I do this week that I have previously expressed reluctance to do?

Prayer of the Faithful:

God guides the humble to justice and teaches them the way, and so in humility we bring our needs before God.

- For the Church, that the Holy Spirit may bind us with the same love, uniting us in heart, so that we may carry out God's will in the world today, let us pray to the Lord.
- For our leaders, that they may have the courage to do what is right and just, even when it is not easy or popular, let us pray to the Lord.
- For missionaries, who spread the Good News through word and action, that they may be kept safe from harm, let us pray to the Lord.
- For our Jewish brothers and sisters as they observe Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the year, let us pray to the Lord.
- That we may humbly regard others as more important than ourselves, looking out for their interests and becoming the face of Christ for our neighbor, let us pray to the Lord.
- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord.

Merciful God, remember your compassion as we struggle to do your will. Listen to the prayers we make here today and in your kindness and goodness answer us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer: Page 140

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Rite of Peace:

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Communion:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

May this heavenly mystery, O Lord, restore us in mind and body, that we may be coheirs in glory with Christ, to whose suffering we are united whenever we proclaim his Death.

Who lives and reigns forever and ever. **Amen**

Concluding Rite:

Final Blessing:

May the Lord bless us, ✠ protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ! **Thanks be to God.**